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ARM. XSTOR 'GARLIC'

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The term for garlic appears a single time in the Old Testament, *Num* 11: 5, where in Hebrew it is שום *šūm*; this is translated in the Septuagint by Gk. σκόρδον 'id.' In time the Armenian version appeared and there we have խստոր *xstor*, the first mention of garlic in Armenian literature. It appears elsewhere in fifth century literature in Գիրք որ կոչի զգօն *Girk' or koči zgōn*, *The Book Which Is Called Learned* (Istanbul 1824: 240): շարաւաճոս սոխովն եւ խստորի "it smells of onion and garlic." Its next recorded usage is in the sixth or seventh century, in the *Bark' Galianosi*, *The Galen Dictionary*. There (Greppin 1983: 102) it translates Gk. σκόρδον, but here the Armenian is given not only as *xstor*, but, with metathesis in an equal number of the manuscript sources, as *sxtor* (about which more follows). The word, still in the form *xstor* appears also in the twelfth century, in Nerses Lambronatsi, in his *Letter to Levon* (*NBHL*): որպէս խստորով ցանկան զիմանալին իրեանց մարդ սպուցանել "And so they desire to nourish the man with their own special garlic." Arm. *xstor* is also found in another twelfth century text, *The Fables* of Mkhitar Gosh, where Galen is quoted: (Venice 1854: 54, #53): Զխստոր Գաղիանոս' թիրակէ կոչէր չինականաց եւ լուեալ մշակի միոյ, առեալ եկեր կայթի, եւ խելազարեալ կորացաւ: "Galen said garlic was a cure-all for peasants. When a worker heard this, he ate garlic by the basket and became both

blind and mad" (Greppin 1990: 92).

Thus we have by the twelfth century one principal form of garlic, *xstor*, and the emerging of another form, *սխտոր sxtor*, which appears along with *xstor* in the *Galen Dictionary*, in a text which has been 'improved' by later copyists. There it glosses Gk. σκόρδον. The next citation we have for 'garlic' in Armenian is in the fifteenth century pharmaceutical work of Amirdovlat¹. There we find the form *sxtor* only, appearing as a gloss of *սում sum* (< Ar. ثوم *thawm* 'garlic') and there we note that garlic plays a role in healing skin eruptions and even leprosy: *եւ (սխտոր) աւզտէ թերթունիւն եւ բորիւն*², Elsewhere it draws the mense and urine, and releases the child and placenta from the womb *եւ զճաշգն եւ զգողն կու յորդորէ եւ զսղիւն զընկերն ի յարգանտէնն կու թափէ*³. This form in *sxtor*, the sole form mentioned by Amirdovlat is later repeated in an early seventeenth century *Book of Medicine*⁴, the *Գիրք բժշկութեան Girk' bžškut'ean* by Buniat Sebastatsi. Buniat notes that garlic is efficacious against headaches, along with the onion *որ է սոխն եւ սխտորն* (Yerevan 1987:66); elsewhere, for a pain in the ear, peeled garlic, boiled with Roman pitch, should be dripped into the ear: *սխտոր կեղեւէ եւ ձոռոմ ձիւթով եռացոյ եւ ի յականջն կաթեցն*

¹ Garlic is not mentioned in the twelfth century medical tract *Ջերմանց միսիրարութիւն* by Mkhitar Heratsi (Venice 1832), and Seidel (1908), with indices.

² Here note Dioscorides II 152: ἀφίστησι (σκόρδον) . . . ἀλφούς, λέπρας.

³ Here note Dioscorides II 152: (σκόρδον) οὖρα ἄγει,

⁴ This text, coming at the very end of the medieval period and still carrying marks of Middle and Classical Armenian (z- with the accusative, final -n instead on -ə as a definite marker after a consonant) is of the Western dialect but contains numerous Turkish, Arabic and Persian loanwords. Its chapter structure very much follows Arabic patterns, beginning main sections with Arm. *duṛn* (= Ar. باب *bāb* 'gate').

(Yerevan 1987: 79).

Thus we see an apparent chronological movement from the fifth to the seventeenth century of the spelling *xstor* to *sxtor*. In the modern language, *sxtor* pretty much replaces the earlier *xstor* in the Eastern dialect, and in Western dialect *sxtor* is overwhelmingly common, *xstor* being now unknown. In the dialects, as recorded by Adjarian, *xstor* is now known only in the dialects of Goris and Artsakh (*HAB*).

It would seem that, with various invocations of metathesis, that Arm. *sxtor* is related to Greek σκόρδον 'garlic.'⁵ A loan is unlikely: because of the odd shape of *xstor*, it can certainly not be a literary loan, the source of most Greek loans into Armenian, since Gk σκ- regularly proceeds into Armenian as *sk-*, Gk. σκηπτός 'lightning,' Arm. *skiptos* 'id,' which is unlikely a popular loan from Asiatic Greek.⁶ An Indo-European source is more likely since we can see the passage to Arm. *-t-* of the *-d-* reflected in σκόρδον. And though we have no other example of IE **sk-* passing into an Armenian word⁷, we might note an Armenian term from

⁵ This etymology does not appear in Hübschmann (*AG*), Meillet (*Esquisse*), or Godel (*Introduction*); it appeared first in Adjarian (*HAB* II 428). Djahukian (*Очерку* 219) suggests an original aspirated IE **skhodoro-*. Often connected to it is Alb. *hurdhë* or *hudhrë*, which is glossed as 'curds' in Huld 1984:75, with Hamp 1986:503, based on the semantic concept of 'separation' of the dairy product, and the division of the garlic cloves. The semantic components are, at best, strained though the phonology works out fine. In fact, the gloss of 'curds' is hard to support in as much as the *Fjalor Shqip Frengjisht* (Tirana 1977) glosses *hudhrë* as 'ail' (garlic).

⁶ In Asiatic Greek we can regularly see the retention, in Armenian, of some archaic features, e.g., intervocalic *-f-*, as in the proper names Levon or Gevorg. In addition, prepalatalization is perhaps found before *upsilon*, as in Gk. σπυρίς, -ίδος > Arm. *sp'iwrid* 'basket,' a term not found in the scriptures.

⁷ Arm. *sk-* cannot be derived from IE **sk-*; there are no suitable examples of that shift. Hübschmann and Meillet list none, and *skesur*

aspirated **skh-*, Arm. *sxalem* 'fall, err, make a false step,' Skt. *skhálati* 'stumble.' It would thus appear that there is a parallel to the development of Arm. *sx-*⁸ (*xstor/sxtor*) from IE **skh-*. I earlier discussed the *tenues aspiratae* and their reflexes in Armenian (1984), basing my investigation largely on the material provided by Hiersche in his work on the *tenues aspiratae* (1964); there I disagreed with Hiersche and concluded that the *tenues aspiratae* were treated in Armenian no differently from the regular *tenues inaspiratae*.

Logically, one would assume that the proto-Armenian form of *xstor* would have been **sxort*, from which there followed metathesis to *sxtor*; *xstor* resulted eventually, but did not replace *sxtor* everywhere, and that form survived on the non-literary level, and eventually reasserted itself in the modern literary dialects. One can, however, only speculate.

But it does seem that we have evidence for IE **sk(h)-*, in two instances, passing to Arm. *sx-*, and in both instances the semantic parallels are very tight. It would be gratifying to note if there were parallels to this shift from IE **sp(h)-* and **st(h)-*, which would accordingly produce Arm. **sf-* and **sθ-*. This of course could not happen

'mother-in-law' is, of course from **swékuros* while *skund* 'lapdog' is perhaps from Post-IE **skuwont-*, a derivative of IE **kuōn-*. Djahukian (Очерку 218-219) erroneously suggests a derivative of Arm. *c'* from IE **sk-*: Arm. *c'elum* 'split, break,' Gk. σκέλλω 'to hoe'; Arm. *c'tim* 'to graze, scratch,' Skt. *chinadmi* 'split, cut off.' On Arm. *skund* see Hamp 1973-1974: 23-25, and **kuon*, with a short *ō*.

- ⁸ This is the only valid circumstance in which we can derive an Arm. *x* from an Indo-European source. Arm. *x* is, however, extremely common in loan words from Persian (Hübschmann AG 157-162); MP *f-* of necessity could only become Arm. *p'* (*farr* > *p'ark'* 'glory'). Iranian **p* > MP *s*; cf. *se* 'three'; and I know of no instance of a Middle Persian *s* from Ir. *p* passed on into Armenian. Certainly there are none so listed in Hübschmann AG, nor in Ayvazian 1992. It is rather likely that **x* entered Armenian from the Anatolian substrat, reflecting *h*.

for there is no dental fricative in Armenian, and a labial fricative was not placed in the alphabet until the tenth century, primarily to reflect Arabic *ف* *f* in the increasingly common loanwords from that language.

Though there are no acceptable examples of IE **sk(h)-* passing to Arm. **sk-*, IE **sp(h)-*⁹ perhaps has at least three possible results. We note Arm. *s*, *sp*, and *p'*. First we can look at a reflex of *s*, as in Arm. *sermn* 'seed,' Gk. σπέρμα 'id' and Arm. *sung*, *sunk* 'mushroom,' Gk. σπόγγος 'sponge'; for Arm. *sp(h)-* we have *spaṛnam* 'threaten, menace,' Lat. *sperno* 'scorn, despise,' Skt. *sphurati*; Arm. *aṛa-speṭ*¹⁰ 'fable, tale,' Goth. *spill* 'id';¹¹ and finally there is Arm. *p'aycatn* 'spleen,' Skt. *plīhā-*, Gk. σπλήν (< **σπλήγχ*), and Arm. *p'ayl* 'glitter,' Skt. *sphuliṅga-* 'spark.'

It is difficult to clean this matter up, but possibly Arm. *sermn* 'seed' could instead be taken with Lat. *creare* 'to create,' with the common Armenian noun forming suffix *-mn*.¹² This would leave only one example of IE **sp-* passing to Arm. *s-*, Arm. *sung*, *sunk* 'mushroom' Gk. σπόγγος 'sponge,' would be semantically far from a powerhouse.¹³ The reflexes in *p'* are more complex, and are often used to show that Armenian has a separate reflex of IE **ph*. However Arm. *p'aycatn* 'spleen' is the only strong etymology showing this *p'*, and its aspiration there might be due to the phonetic confusion which can accompany a taboo word, for the spleen and other inner organs were important in Indo-European magic medicine and soothsaying¹⁴. Thus there is only one

⁹ IE **p-* of course provides either Arm. *h-* (*het* 'footprint, vestige', IE **ped-*) or zero (*otn* 'foot,' IE **pod-*).

¹⁰ The preposition *aṛ* 'toward,' appears as *aṛa* before a consonant: note *aṛa-grem* 'inscribe.'

¹¹ Also add Eng. *spiel* 'persuasive narrative,' presumably via Yiddish.

¹² Note Arm. *getmn* 'fleece,' Lat. *vellus* (< **welnos*) 'id.'

¹³ Frisk (*GEW*) seems to find the correspondence appealing, alas.

¹⁴ When one resorts to 'taboo,' one is on rather subjective ground, though here such an invocation seems at least possible.

substantial reflex of IE **(s)p(h)*, and that is Arm. *sp*, while **p* itself gives *h-* or *zero*, as noted above.

The Armenian reflex of IE **t* (or **th*) is rather simple, for it passes to Arm. *t'*. There is only one example for aspirated IE **th*, and that is Arm. *ort'* 'calf,' Skt. *pr̥th-uka-* 'young animal.' This reflex corresponds easily to the reflex of Indo-European non-aspirated **t-*, also Arm *t'*, as in *t'aranim* 'to fade,' Gk. τέρσομαι 'become dry,' Goth. *ga-pāisan* 'id,' and *t'at'awim* 'to immerse in water,' OCS топити 'immerse.' The reflexes of IE **st(h)-* appears as Arm. *st-* as in *sterj* 'barren, sterile,' Gk. στεῖρα 'a cow that has not calved' while IE **sth-* provides the same: Arm. *stuar* 'thick,' Skt. **sthāvira-* 'id.'

Thus it appears that the passage of IE **sk* to Arm. *sx* is probably acceptable, and not unharmonious. That there is no parallel occurs because there was no *f* or *θ* in Classical Armenian, while the passages of IE **sp(h)-* and *st(h)-* to Arm. *sp-* and *st-* are not contradictory.

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